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Moral Foundations and Judgment: Conceptualizing Boundaries

Consumers regularly encounter moral behavior-related information about firms (e.g. Enron), brands (e.g. Tylenol), and individuals (e.g. President Trump). Since morality is considered to be a significant foundation for consumers' self-concepts and a motivating force in society, it is deemed an essential factor in shaping attitudes, values, and purchase intentions. Morality covers practices and activities considered importantly right and wrong, including the rules governing those activities, and the values that are imbedded, fostered, or pursued by their practices (DeGeorge 1982). Further, moral behavior relates to, "actions that demonstrate social responsiveness to the needs and interest of others," (Aquino et al., 2009, p 124), or, how people are expected to treat others (Turiel, 1983). As such, a behavior is considered moral if it conforms to established practices and customs of the relevant group (Weiss, 1942).

Even though the definitions of morality may seem to provide straightforward criteria to assess the morality of individuals, moral judgments are challenging and less exact. First, the fashion in which the moral information is delivered to consumers, the type of moral incident (e.g. eating certain animals, infidelity, etc.), and individuals' characteristics influencing their processing of the information could impact how consumers comprehend, interpret, and act on the information. Second, often, these judgments are based on limited information, such that a person is not fully informed about the complete incident (De Groot and Steg, 2009). This is compounded by consumers' biased perceptual system resulting in individuals' tendency to attend more to negative than positive information (Rozin and Royzman, 2001), especially when the negative information pertains to morality, compared to other negative information (Trump 2014).

For instance, it is important to note that consumers can and do disallow moral violations to inform judgments and decisions. Belk et al. (2006) found that consumers experience a lack of concern for a firm's moral violations and this affects subsequent product

choice, particularly when concerned with the environment, labor conditions, or counterfeits. Perhaps this explains why consumers criticize firms for their treatment of employees and business partners (e.g. Wal-Mart), yet, these businesses remain frequented by and loved by consumers. Anecdotes provide evidence of instances that cannot be explained by referring to principles of morality. As an example, one salient attribute of Tiger Woods is his philandering. Though some individuals dislike him, and his scandal cost shareholders approximately \$10 billion, some others moved past the incident and regard him highly (Knittel and Stango, 2010). Likewise, Bill Clinton won two terms in office despite infidelity.

These inconsistencies and complexities beg the question of how individuals construe different meaning from moral information. Importantly, these instances highlight the need to further study morality and moral judgment, specifically identifying factors that interact and influence the relationship between consumer's moral judgment and related attitudes and behavioral outcomes (Shalvi et al., 2012). Such an approach helps answer questions such as “what are the boundary conditions for moral judgments?” “are there particular consumers which attend more to moral information, and thus, are more likely to punish offending entities?” and “why do moral violations not always result in negative outcomes?”

Noting that morality issues may differ across cultures and even within a culture, and some consumers can flexibly view a moral issue, such that moral judgments can be malleable, the present research aims to advance the streams of research on morality and moral judgment by providing a conceptualization of boundary conditions in the relationship between moral judgments and consumer behavior. More specifically, the research identifies cultural, individual, and situational factors that influence moral judgments and decision making and argues that 1) moral judgments exhibit a similar pattern across types but 2) cultural factors determine the salience of each moral foundation type, 3) while construal factors relevant to the situation (i.e. proximity vs. distance) affect the extent and manner of moral judgment, and

4) individual mindsets and their associated information processing styles (e.g. money vs. time orientation and promotion vs. prevention orientation) can make moral judgments more malleable, adding a degree of variability to judgments within similar cultures and situations.

Morality and Society

Four features distinguish a moral situation from other social situations namely, 1) high importance of the situation, 2) its intentionality (i.e. accidentally violating a norm is not immoral), 3) the inability to change the moral rules to exempt penalty, and 4) a felt pressure to conform to the norms (Hart, 1961). As a society experiences specific instances where all criteria have been met, according to Walzer (1983), the morality of a community is gradually built up and acquired, and thus, related to its customs, what the society or group accepts as being the right or wrong way to act, as well as its laws, which add legal prohibitions and sanctions to many activities considered to be immoral (DeGeorge, 1982, p. 13).

Generally, individuals act in a manner that follows social customs and laws. Deviation from societal custom and laws, though, can be explained by the Norm Activation Model (NAM; Schwartz, 1977), which includes three variables related to moral behaviors. The first moral variable, personal norms (PN), is defined as the feeling of “moral obligation to perform or refrain from specific actions” (Schwartz and Howard, 1981, p. 191). The second variable relates more to the sanctions and penalties of acting immorally, awareness of consequences (AC), defined as awareness of the negative consequences for others or for other things one values when not acting morally. The third variable is ascription of responsibility (AR), related to the feeling of responsibility for the negative consequences such that low AR means that individuals do not feel culpable when their immoral actions led to negative consequences.

According to De Groot and Steg (2009), awareness of the consequences of the behavior is needed for individuals to feel sufficiently responsible for engagement in moral or immoral behavior. In other words, only when AC is high do individuals experience high AR.

In turn, responsibility feelings (i.e. AR) increase feelings of moral obligation to act in a certain way (i.e. PN), and these feelings of obligation induce moral behavioral intentions. For example, a negative celebrity incident may lead consumers to evaluate the incident's impact on societal norms in association with how much blame the celebrity deserves (White et al., 2009). This is further corroborated by studies arguing that awareness of consequences affects ascription of responsibility, and responsibility indirectly affects intentions and behavior via personal norms (Steg et al., 2005).

Relatedly, some evidence exists indicating that the average consumer believes the government to be responsible (low AR) for discouraging immoral actions (e.g., discouraging unethical products and brands), and thus, ethical information and even moral appeals do not influence consumer decision making (Belk et al., 2005). In these instances, felt consequences (AC) are low, which rationalize individuals to feel low PN toward moral actions (Zhou and Whitla, 2013). Specifically, research shows that those who live in social democracies (e.g. Sweden, Germany, Spain), believe that since their societies ensure ethical/moral behavior and make individual responsibility low, then the citizens do not need to be concerned (Eckhardt et al., 2009). This is troubling, as citizens may decide to outsource moral judgments to regulatory agencies. After all, moral behavior relates to, "actions that demonstrate social responsiveness to the needs and interest of others," (Aquino et al., 2009, p 124). In other words, given that morality incorporates social dimensions and cannot be viewed as an individual function, morals were designed to promote group wellbeing (Moore and Gino, 2013), promoting harmony and diminishing selfishness (Haidt, 2008).

Morality and social norms are important components in guiding society, promoting social welfare, and achieving economic development. As Goodin (2010) argues, conventional morality (encouraging trust, honesty and punctuality in economic transactions) generally results in individuals behaving morally. Moreover, cultures with strong social norms enforced

by the group (i.e. norms shared and accepted by all members of society) and high in conventional morality reduce the need for legal enforcement and decrease the cost of bargaining and monitoring (Karayiannis and Hatzis, 2012) because morality underscores consumption (Devas, 1899) and thereby consumer judgments and decision making (Nielsen and McGregor, 2013). For instance, moral beliefs affect prosocial behaviors such as volunteering, donating blood, and helping in emergency situations (De Groot and Steg, 2009).

Given that research ascertains morality as stable within societies, it is necessary to, first, establish a framework for understanding existing moral foundations in order to understand the extent to which individuals consider morality as malleable. The approaches to study morality and its evolution are reviewed in order to comprehensively examine morality and make subsequent propositions.

Approaches to study morality

Considering the interdisciplinary nature of the concept of morality, it has been studied by researchers in several fields including legal studies, ethics, sociology, psychology, education, and marketing following different perspectives (Cornwell and Higgins, 2015, 2017; Gino and Mogilner, 2013; Napier and Luguri, 2013; etc.). The evolutionary biosocial perspective to study morality has focused on certain emotions, such as empathy, altruism, guilt, and shame, and how they influence moral decisions. Other, researchers, instead, have taken a developmental perspective, studying an infant's acquisition of prosocial behavior or an individual's attempts to make sense of social experiences over time. Haidt and colleagues attempted to reconcile both approaches.

Within the marketing domain, research generally examines moral decision making under specific instances, such as evaluating how consumers approach a decision to an immoral marketplace offering (i.e. firm, brand, or person; e.g. Trump, 2014; etc.).

Particularly, the consumer moral decision making and judgment research focuses on investigating either specific factors (variables, such as individual differences) related to moral actions or a broader assessment involving general moral beliefs such as how values differ across cultures (e.g., Moore and Kim, 2003). In the former stream, research integrates both an evolutionary biosocial approach, considering emotions and individual motivations (e.g. regulatory focus, rationalizing strategies, as well as the role of evolutionary agency (i.e. age of acquiring prosocial orientation and personal beliefs (e.g. political orientation; Corwnwell and Higgins, 2017; Iyer et al., 2012)). The present research combines both approaches to examine specific variables (individual, situational, and cultural) as boundary conditions given a broader assessment of culture in general that interplay with moral judgments and decisions in an effort to shed more light on how consumers respond to moral violations. The next section examines the development of moral foundations in the literature and discusses how culture in general underpins each moral foundation.

Moral Foundations Theory

Several groups of researchers have aimed to arrive at a set of moral foundations that guide decision-making, and thus consumer behavior. Shweder et al. (1997) claimed a ‘big three’ theory of morality, where individuals subscribed to values based on ethics of autonomy (i.e. freedom to pursue happiness without infringing upon others such as that espoused by democratic governments), community (i.e. desire to act in order to sustain group membership), and divinity (i.e. following divine laws such as purity). While values of autonomy exist across all types of cultures, community and divinity possess variable importance across cultures (Haidt et al., 1993; Shweder et al., 1997). In deciphering differences in cultures, Schwartz (1992) deviated from morals specifically, arriving at an inventory of values.

In particular, Schwartz and Boehnke (2014), speculated that individuals pursue several values, examining values in over 60 countries. Their results identified five of which that are morality-centric: universalism (i.e. unity, justice, and fairness), benevolence (i.e. kindness and helpfulness), conformity (i.e. obedience to authority, politeness), tradition (i.e. accept group norms, religious tradition), and security (i.e. loyalty and keeping social order), with others non-central to morality, such as power and achievement. According to Helkama (2004), three or four values (e.g. universalism, benevolence, and conformity/tradition) are the most important moral values as they serve important roles in every culture, consistent with evolutionary theories on the role of cooperation for social cohesion (Krebs, 2008) and parallel Shweder et al.'s (1997) concepts of autonomy and community. In other words, these values do not vary by country, but are universal, accepted by all cultures (Vauclair and Fischer, 2011).

Graham and colleagues (Graham et al., 2009) assimilated the works of Shweder et al. (1997), Schwartz's (1992) values, the ethic of justice, and the ethic of autonomy arriving at two major moral foundations: individualizing and binding. Whereas individualizing foundations protecting individuals' freedoms and rights, binding foundations correspond to relations with others and groups, such as social norms and community life. Like the autonomy ethic, individualizing foundations guide all cultures equally (Graham et al., 2009). To further explain moral differences across a general cultural scope, Graham et al. (2011) created Moral Foundations Theory. Five moral foundations were initially explained to guide all decision-making, including care (i.e. benevolence), fairness (i.e. justice, proportional equality, universalism), loyalty (i.e. patriotism, safety, self-sacrifice), authority (i.e. respect for tradition, obedience to a hierarchy), and purity (i.e. sanctity from degradation, religious traditions). Iyer et al. (2012) then added a sixth foundation, liberty (i.e. reacting against oppression and domination).

Furthering the work on Moral Foundations theory, Janoff-Bulman et al. (2009) proposed that all foundations can be both prescriptive (i.e. what one should engage in) or proscriptive (i.e. what one should avoid, condemn), with past research situating care, loyalty, and purity as mostly prescriptive. Moreover, authority has not received much attention from research, and freedom values have yet to be considered (Loureiro et al., 2016). Table 1 builds upon on the work of Loureiro et al. (2016) and Iyer et al. (2012) by adding prescriptive and proscriptive features of the freedom foundation and outlines the relationships amongst these moral norms, the terms used, as well as universality of the foundation.

Insert Table 1 Here

The next section demonstrates how cultures may respond differently to the moral foundations. The section also identifies individual and situational factors that influence moral judgments and consumer responses.

Cultural Values and Morality Judgment

According to terror management theory (Greenberg et al., 1989), negative reactions to moral transgressors occur because such deviance implicitly threatens the validity of one's own beliefs and values and the cultural conception of reality from which they are derived. Thus, in the case of a moral foundation violation, it is implied either that the moral may not be valid or that the violator is evil. Rather than considering the moral principle invalid, people prefer to view the violator as evil. Thus, societies tend to punish those who break norms. Following these arguments, Greenberg et al. (1989) found that when mortality is made salient, individuals respond positively toward those who uphold cultural values and negatively toward those who violate cultural values. More specifically, moral principles facilitate individuals' efforts to conceive of themselves as valued contributors to the culture. Thus:

P0: The salience of moral principles and values in a culture influences individual reactions to immorality.

Individualism vs. Collectivism

It is important to differentiate collectivistic and individualistic societies, which differ in their emphasis on moral foundations, as defined by emphasizing duties versus rights and individuals versus groups. Duty-based cultures, reflective of how individuals conduct themselves in relation to others (Chiu et al., 1997), exhibit strict adherence to moral values as they are explicit and expected to be followed. Collectivist cultures tend to value duties over rights so they place high value on both individualizing and binding values (Vauclair et al., 2014), including community and divinity ethics (Haidt et al., 1993; Shweder et al., 1997).

As justice and freedom are linked to democracies (Haidt and Graham, 2009), individualistic culture (e.g. France, Great Britain, etc.) value rights over duties (Chiu et al., 1997; Vauclair et al., 2014) and place higher values on individualizing moral foundations. Specifically, rights-based cultures, are less likely to experience the same strong adherence to social norms, and because the duties to adhere to are not directly expressed, these cultures value individualizing norms more, with an exception of authority (Graham et al., 2011). Likewise, since individuals are likely to pursue ends disagreeable to a society but not harmful to anyone, Vauclair and Fischer (2011) find that some binding foundations, such as purity, may be violated without negative judgment. Thus, collectivist cultures tend to value all moral foundations while individualistic cultures value individualizing foundations over binding foundations. In sum, both cultures value individualizing morals because of the universal rules associated with cooperation (Richerson and Boyd, 2005) and emphasis on personal norms (Schwartz and Howard, 1981).

P1: The strength of individuals' judgments of individualizing vs. binding moral violations depend on the degree of individualism vs. collectivism of their culture.

As cultural values tend to shift, it is noteworthy that several collectivist societies have become more individualistic. Especially with the rise of the younger populations, individualistic tendencies have developed in several societies traditionally associated with collectivism, such as Asian societies (Hamamura, 2011). Therefore, going forward, research should explore how younger generations within collectivist societies view individualizing versus binding foundations, and how this affects society overall. Formally:

P2: Younger generations in traditionally collectivist countries are concerned less about binding foundations and more about individualizing foundations.

Cultural Religiosity

Societies also differ by their religiosity and spirituality, both of which regard morality the same (Zinnbauer and Pargament, 2005). For instance, the United States has a strong evangelical community compared to France, a politically Catholic society, but very secular in practice (Davis, 2009). This is partially attributed to the role of morality in society, where morals may be more or less important in defining social hierarchies (Lamont, 1992). In societies high in religion or spirituality, individuals have a greater regard for morality, punishing more fervently immorality (Walker and Pitts, 1998). Additionally, religious/spiritual societies value all moral values (Vauclair and Fischer, 2011), are less likely violate proscriptive behaviors, and more likely engage in prescriptive moral actions (Rodriguez-Rad and Hidalgo, 2018). However, as younger generations become less spiritual/ religious, changing the culture, it is anticipated that their adherence to these norms will decline. Thus:

P3: The strength of individuals' judgments of proscriptive vs. prescriptive moral violations depend on the degree of religiosity of their culture.

P4: Younger generations in traditionally religious or spiritual countries are less concerned about moral foundations, especially purity.

Situational Factors and Morality Judgment

Beyond viewing culture as a lens to evaluate moral judgment, situations can influence how groups and individuals in a society may reorient their views in regards to a moral violation. For instance, not all situations involve one decision, such as whether or not to lie to the group. Instead, lying might be beneficial as long as it spares others' feelings or is done for the greater good. In these cases, culture alone cannot explain moral judgment and decision making. For this, construal level theory can be used.

Construal Level

Construal level theory approaches all situations in terms of proximity (spatially, psychologically, and temporally) and suggests that when a situation is far, individuals prefer abstract construal, such as the big picture. However, when a situation is more proximal, they prefer to use concrete construal for evaluations, such as details and specific information (Trope and Liberman, 2003). While the preference for abstract versus concrete thoughts varies by culture (Haidt et al., 1993), a situational construal level approach to morality can further explain why some individuals or groups do not negatively judge immorality.

As such, while concrete thinking involves affect and the details of the violation, abstract thinking is more cognitive and concerned with the universal norms (Nichols and Knobe, 2008) and why an individual behaves immorally (Eyal et al., 2008). This would explain why individuals, would generally judge a moral violation negatively but rationalize immorality if a universal moral violation was adhered to (i.e. to achieve the common good, sometimes it is ok to break a minor moral foundation). Even though abstract thoughts lead to more negative judgments following a moral violation (Napier and Luguri, 2013), there may be reason to believe that this is not always the case.

For one, abstract construal tends to focus on individualizing over binding foundations. Napier and Luguri (2013) suggest that violations of binding foundations may be judged more individually and contextually. Such is the case when individuals tend to share the same values (Kivetz and Tyler, 2007). It is proposed that when construing events in an abstract manner, moral foundations are seen in a hierarchy (see Figure 1). Universal, individualizing foundations (i.e. bottom level moral foundations) will be more critical to the group and will take precedent over other foundations. The universal, binding foundations are at the second level. Finally, purity and authority are at the third level. In other words, lower foundations will be more critical to the group, such that their violations will be more negatively judged.

P5: Individuals who hold an abstract (vs. concrete) construal will more negatively judge a moral violation, especially those lower in the hierarchy.

P6: When the behavior violates a moral foundation higher in the hierarchy in favor of a moral behavior consistent with a moral foundation in a lower hierarchy, having an abstract construal will result in less negative judgments.

Insert Figure 1 here.

Moreover, it is possible to predict how an individual may construe a situation, determining consumer judgment. Given that an abstract construal results in harsher judgments when evaluated with less (vs. greater) proximity (Kim et al., 2008), an abstract construal makes moral foundations more salient (Trope and Liberman, 2003). For instance, an abstract construal resulted in less negative judgment when evaluating the action in the present versus the future (Eyal et al., 2008) or past (Kyung et al., 2010). Proximity makes a moral violation less negative since it is viewed as a specific action (e.g. having an affair) versus as a breach to a moral foundation (e.g. trust and purity foundations) (Eyal et al., 2008). On the other hand, an individual that likes, personally knows, or evaluates a moral situation in the present will

most likely use concrete criteria for evaluating a moral situation, and will judge a violator less negatively (Chung and Park, 2013).

When viewing a violation concretely, individuals tend to consider details (Kim et al., 2008; Nichols and Knobe, 2008), which might include responsibility of the violator, including whether other individuals could share blame. Given that personal norms are more abstract (Kivetz and Tyler, 2007), abstract thinking focuses on why (Eyal et al., 2008), and the situation is diagnostic (Nussbaum et al., 2003), it is predicted that abstract thoughts focus less on attributions of responsibility and more on the consequences, instead of whether the action was simply morally right or wrong. Formally:

P7: Abstract construal of a moral violation will result in less negative judgments when proximal. This is explained through diagnosticity of social norms.

P8: In an abstract construal, awareness of consequences plays a stronger role in moral judgment compared to ascription of responsibility.

Individual Factors and Moral Judgment

The aforementioned propositions can shed more light on why individuals value moral foundations and their beliefs do not always align with their actions (e.g. Eckhardt et al., 2009). In addition to the situation pertaining to the type of moral foundation violated, and how this situation affects the ascription of responsibility, awareness of consequences, and social norms, an individual's motivations should alter how he or she judges a moral violation. A discussion of this follows.

Individual Trait Malleability

While rationalizing enables individuals to justify positive feelings despite immoral actions, moral decoupling involves a psychological separation process of dissociation of

immoral behavior from consequences (Bhattacharjee et al., 2013). A cognitive process, moral decoupling suggests some individuals can cognitively (rather than emotionally) evaluate immorality (Lee and Kwak, 2016). While the use of moral decoupling varies, some individuals may be able to use more cognitive strategies assessing awareness of consequences, ascription of responsibility, and social norms (Graham et al., 2009; Haidt, 2001). Consistent with these ideas, Tiger Woods' supporters publicly admonished his private affairs while suggesting that his performance on the golf course is a completely different and separate aspect of his life (Horrow and Swatek, 2009).

P9: Individuals' ability to exercise moral decoupling affects their judgment of moral violations.

As Bhattacharjee et al. (2013) claim, understanding when individuals can engage in moral decoupling rather than using intuitive biases or emotions is a promising area for future research. This paper furthers this research agenda and discuss certain cases in which moral judgments can be more malleable due to moral decoupling.

Individuals' Regulatory Focus

Regulatory focus theory is a goal pursuit theory arguing that individuals with promotion versus prevention orientation engage different mental approaches in their judgment and decision making (Roy and Phau, 2014), which may be helpful in understanding when to use facts versus emotions to change consumer behavior. According to regulatory focus theory, a prevention focus has more concerns for safety and security and uses concrete facts since their decisions are deliberative and analytical (Forster et al., 2003; Pham and Avnet, 2009). In contrast a promotion focus, motivated to accomplish hopes and dreams (Higgins, 1998) relies more on feelings, emotions (Cornwell and Higgins, 2017; Pham and Avnet, 2009), intuition, and speed in decision making (Forster et al. 2003).

These facts provide support that different types of information may influence how each orientations influence judgments, such that, referring to the NAM, a prevention-orientation would be influenced by assessment of consequences and ascription of responsibility (Schwartz & Howard, 1981); it is expected that a prevention-focus will less negatively judge a moral violator when these factors are lower. The following propositions are offered:

P10: When engaged in a prevention-orientation, individuals who attribute less consequences involved in a moral violation and/or less ascription of responsibility to the violator will judge the moral violator less negatively.

P11: When engaged in a promotion-orientation, the consequences and risks of the moral violation are less likely to influence judgments of a moral violation.

Although past research has found that both orientations involve are concerned with proscriptive and prescriptive morals (e.g. prevention-orientation involves approaching duties and avoiding punishments; promotion implies approach of desirable and avoidance of undesirable state) (Cornwell and Higgins, 2015), more research is needed to understand morality from a regulatory focus perspective. Specifically, when judging others' actions, such when examining proscriptive (should avoid) or prescriptive (should do or could do) norms (Janoff-Bulman et al., 2009), one should account for individual tendencies of the two regulatory foci. For instance, prevention-orientation is tied more closely to prescriptive morality (i.e. duties and obligations), similar to collective tendencies and interdependent preferences (Zhang et al., 2014). Thus, it is predicted that when violating a proscriptive norm, those in a prevention-orientation will judge the violator more negatively. And, while prescriptive norms may not be as important in the behavior of others, it is expected that promotion-orientation would be more negative compared to prevention-orientation. Specifically:

P12: While proscriptive moral violations are judged more negatively than violations of prescriptive morals, having a promotion- (vs. prevention-) orientation will result in more (vs. less) negative judgments for violations of prescriptive morals.

While all moral violations would be equally deplorable for those in a promotion orientation, there are some moral foundations that would be esteemed more negatively than others. For instance, given that purity (i.e. divinity norms) and binding norms are more related to feelings and emotions in relation to others in groups (Graham et al., 2012; Shweder, et al., 1997) and since promotion (vs. prevention) orientation evaluates based on feelings (vs. facts) (Higgins, 1998), it is predicted that violations of binding and divinity norms are more negatively judged for individuals when experiencing a promotion- versus prevention-orientation. Thus:

P13: A prevention (vs. promotion) orientation results in less negative judgments when violating a divinity or binding (vs. individualizing) moral foundation.

Individuals' Emphasis on Money versus Time

According to construal theory, concrete (vs. abstract) thinking involves a stronger focus on symbolic rewards such as resources of money and time (Nussbaum et al., 2003). However, little is known about how thinking about concrete features of time versus money can inform moral judgments. While this trait is culturally derived, such that more individualistic cultures tend to think of money more and collectivist cultures tend to value time over money), it could be religion-influenced, situationally-dependent (e.g. individuals in lower socio-economic positions focus on money over time; Mogilner, 2010), or even individually-determined, a malleable trait (Gino and Mogilner, 2013).

Specifically, thinking about time triggers an individual to reflect on his or her life (Loewenstein, 1999), promotes pursuit of universal ideals (Liu and Aaker, 2007), leads to

greater happiness (Mogilner and Aaker, 2009), and encourages personal engagement (Mogilner, 2010). However, thinking about money makes an individual more selfish, seeking autonomy (Amato and Rogers, 1997; Vohs et al., 2008; Zhou et al., 2009) and can prevent individuals from feeling mental pain associated with social exclusion (Zhou et al., 2009), equivalent to actual physical pain (MacDonald and Leary, 2005; DeWall and Baumeister, 2006). In other words, when individuals normally feel mental pain, such as sanctions and penalizations (e.g. outcast by a group or verbal reprimanding), money thoughts could buffer individuals from pain. Similarly, it would be expected that money thoughts focus individuals on a task, such as judgment, without raising concern for the pain caused by immorality or its judgment. Thus, it is expected that thoughts about money make an individual less likely to judge others negatively for immorality.

Additionally, compared to time, which uses heuristics and emotions for evaluation, money-related thoughts use more cognitive processes (Saini and Monga, 2008), leading to greater objectivity (Mogilner, 2010). Because cognitive processes are more adept when thinking of money, it would be expected that logic would determine judgments as opposed to time, which involves feelings and emotions (Williams and Drolet, 2005) as opposed to those who think about time (i.e. considering social norms and concern for others) where groups are more personally relevant (Mogilner, 2010). Even though money- (vs. time) related thinking is hypothesized to result in less negative judgments, it is estimated that judgments will be more negative if there are greater consequences and responsibility when in a money mindset. Specifically:

P14: Having a money (vs. time)-focused mindset results in less negative judgments following a violation of a moral foundation.

P15: Though a time mindset will not change moral judgment given concrete information, a money mindset may lead to greater (vs. less) negative judgment given high (vs. low) awareness of consequences and/or ascription of responsibility.

General Discussion and Conclusions

In summary, despite seemingly straightforward definitions of morality and the abundance of criteria to assess morality of individual, organizational, and people brands, moral judgments are challenging and less exact, resulting in contrasting reactions and judgments to moral violations across and even within cultures. Following a thorough, interdisciplinary review of extant literature and building on the precepts of norm activation model and moral foundation theory, the present research uniquely brings together literature from consumer research, social psychology, ethics, and morality and identifies boundary conditions in the relationship between moral judgments and consumer behavior.

In so doing, the research makes several contributions. First, the paper connects different categorizations of moral principles and create a reference point for future research to identify prescriptive and proscriptive features of each of the six moral foundations as well as their universality or variability across cultures (See Table 1). Second, the research categorizes factors influencing individuals' judgments of moral violations into cultural, situational, and individual factors. Such a perspective proves helpful in discussing contradictions regarding reactions to moral transgressions of different type among individuals. Third, several propositions are presented that can guide future research in the areas of moral judgment and consumer behavior.

More specifically, it is argued that cultural values of individualism vs. collectivism are associated with right-based and duty-based characteristics of the culture which impact how members of the society respond to individualizing vs. binding moral foundation violations.

The propositions suggest that while collectivist cultures value all moral foundations, individualistic cultures value individualizing foundations over binding foundations. Furthermore, cultural religiosity is identified as another cultural factor influence moral judgments. Moreover, the degree of religiosity of cultures should influence the degree of reaction to proscriptive vs. prescriptive moral violations. Propositions have also been made predicting how changes in cultural values may influence judgments of immorality.

Furthermore, construal level theory provides the foundation for the influence of situational factors on moral judgments. The research proposed groups moral foundations in three levels based on their degree of universality from the perspective of construal theory. Noting that abstract vs. concrete construal levels result in varying levels of attention to details and perceptions of relevance of actions/situations, arguing that different construal levels will result in different judgments of moral violations with varying degrees of universality as well as the factors influencing judgments (e.g. attribution of responsibility and consequences).

Individual factors, such as regulatory focus and money versus time mindset, are also discussed to have an effect on moral judgments by influencing individuals' motivation and approach in processing information. From the regulatory focus theory perspective, promotion results in less focus on consequences, risks, and details of actions. Such differences influence the ability and interest of individuals in focusing on risks of moral violations or personal emotional reactions to such violations. Consequently, for prevention-focused individuals, lack of risks, negative consequences, or responsibility will result in less negative judgments of moral violations. Similarly, a money versus time-focused mindset will result in different degrees of attention to social norms versus personal goals which will consequently inform individuals' judgments of moral violations. These are just two individual differences that exist within the overall framework. However, future research and conceptual papers should

highlight other individual difference variables along both evolutionary biosocial and age of agency perspectives, detailing if and when morality is malleable.

Overall, the present research makes a rather unique contribution to consumer morality literature, by identifying and discussing three different groups of factors with the potential to impact individuals' judgments of and reactions to moral foundation violation information.

The paper has endeavored to provide an inclusive account of how cultural, situational, and individual factors interact with various moral foundations to influence consumer judgments.

Future research can corroborate and extend the proposed relationships following experimental and cross-cultural studies.

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